

June 13, 2013

Phill Black, President
The Sentinel Police Association
1889 Central Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45214

President Black:

In response to your letter where you cite a "Vote of No Confidence" on behalf of the Sentinel Police Association, I provide the following response. After reviewing your letter, I have learned that some on your executive board were unaware that your letter was forwarded to me on behalf of the Association. I would then question whether it was a majority opinion of your membership that believed I failed during my tenure as the Cincinnati Police Department's 13th police chief. As you know, throughout my tenure, I have been fortunate to earn the trust and support of many sworn officers, regardless of race. The basis of this support was on the premise they finally had a voice in the Department that mattered; decisions made were not unilateral, rather, reflective of what was needed and desired; and, there was transparency in every aspect of our operations. Furthermore, as you pointed out, I did earn the support of many people in our neighborhoods; however that support was balanced with placing emphasis on the outstanding work performed by our police officers.

I acknowledge my comments associated with a strong desire to "level the playing field." As I reflect on my tenure, I reject your notion that the Department in some way has been "set back twenty years" and "as things changed, things remain the same." I embrace and understand change, which has been a major part of my agenda and evidenced by the response of rank and file officers. One ranking staff member said it best when he stated that during his 25-years, he experienced more "positive" changes during my tenure than any other time in his career. This statement has been echoed by many in the Department and in some instances during meetings where you were in attendance. In leveling the playing field, a leader provides an opportunity for all to compete equally and fairly without regard to race, gender, religion, and/or sexual orientation. Your assertion that there was no change in this area lacks merit and there are many examples to refute your claim.

When you comment on sustaining organizational change, you overlook the training opportunities and selections to preferred assignments. Sustainability of change is based on opportunities afforded to individuals who otherwise would not have been selected to attend training that prepares individuals in assuming the role of a police executive or police chief. As a sitting member on my Internal Advisory Board, you were privy to organizational decisions and had the ability to offer insights and recommendations. Furthermore, I met routinely with the Sentinel Board to discuss

current issues and/or concerns you had regarding pending disciplinary matters or workplace environmental concerns. In every instance, we responded to any concerns raised and took immediate action to address these issues. Your assertion that the disciplinary process was unfair and never addressed is clearly unfounded. Furthermore, there are many reasons why immediate transfers are initiated; however after we discussed the circumstances you acknowledged the necessity of the transfers.

When we met in my office last week, you acknowledged your disappointment toward an African-American not being selected to the assistant police chief vacancy. When identifying the best possible candidates to fill a vacant assistant police chief position, African-American and Caucasian captains were selected to lead and manage the bureau of criminal investigations without the oversight of an assistant chief. The effort was designed to give each an equal opportunity to manage at the level of an assistant chief. I described for you our selection process that comprised a diverse panel of three African-Americans and two Caucasians. I was impressed with the work performed by this panel that represented a local community activist, a business professional, the Director of Cincinnati's Human Resources, the Executive Assistant Chief, and I. The final decision of the panel was a unanimous vote that the candidate selected was clearly the most qualified out of the five candidates. However, this does not suggest that the remaining candidates were not qualified, simply put, the candidate selected distinguished himself from the group. I discussed with you my desire to ensure the process was transparent, fair, and that I would not make a unilateral decision against the panel's decision. I explained to you that to do otherwise would be unethical. I should reiterate to you that I requested this meeting with you not for the purpose of an apology or to gain your approval in accepting this panel's decision.

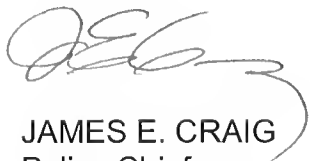
Another key point is that prior to the commencement of the interview phase of the process, I went through an exhaustive review of possible top candidates. This review included, but was not limited to, scheduled meetings with groups of sworn and civilian staff to initiate dialogue on their views concerning the group of finalists. This feedback was insightful and this effort was a clear departure from how the prior administration functioned and not reflective of conducting "business as usual." Furthermore, the absence of leadership on your part was apparent when you made no effort to contact me to discuss your disappointment in the outcome of this process. Instead you decided to initiate a campaign to discredit me and to publically criticize the process without knowing the facts. I remind you that during your campaign as the Association's next president, you stressed your desire to remain transparent. However, you have not lived up to that expectation based on your unwillingness to remain candid during our meetings. When confronted with innuendos or rumors, you flatly deny knowledge and then proceed to take actions that are contrary to what was discussed.

You know that as president of the *Oscar Joel Bryant Foundation*, an African-American police association of the Los Angeles Police Department, I served during a time that relations between minority communities and the police department was a challenge, particularly during the *Rodney King Incident*. Our organization recognized that we needed to take responsibility for ensuring that training opportunities were available to

our members, that meaningful promotional seminars were conducted, and that we played a vital role in working with high-risk communities in fostering positive relationships between the police and the community. Despite your participation on the *Chief's Internal Advisory Board* and the regular scheduled meetings with you and your Board, you have offered no recommendations on how we could work together to provide opportunities to enrich officers' careers. In moving forward during the remainder of your term as president, I offer the following suggestions. In response to leveling the playing field, your participation in hosting meaningful training seminars to prepare your members, as well as non-members in seeking promotional opportunities or selection to preferred assignments, would go a long way in becoming a collaborative partner with CPD management. Your willingness to be part of the solution, rather than simply reporting concerns lacking foundation will go a long way in building positive relationships in reducing workplace concerns.

As Cincinnati's police chief, I have represented all sworn and civilian members of the Department, regardless of race, gender, and rank. Throughout my tenure, fairness has been paramount to ensuring morale was sustained. It is undisputed that morale of the CPD was high during my tenure and it was not because of nepotism, unfair discipline, or not promptly addressing allegations of misconduct. Frankly, I find it interesting that you wait until I prepare to leave this Department as Detroit's next police chief to raise these issues. I remain optimistic on the future of the Cincinnati Police Department based on the many talented men and women that will continue to move this "model" police agency forward.

Sincerely,



JAMES E. CRAIG
Police Chief
Cincinnati Police Department

cc: City Manager, City of Cincinnati
Mayor, City of Cincinnati
Chairperson, Public Safety Committee, Cincinnati City Council
President, Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge No. 69